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SUBSCRIPTION RATES  
OUTSIDE MACON COUNTY INSIDE MACON COUNTY  
One Year \$3.00 One Year \$2.50  
Six Months 1.75 Six Months 1.75  
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What It Means Here

Last week the Communist Vietminh forces cut French Indo-China in two.

So what? you might ask. How does that affect you and me in Macon County?

The time was when that question would have made sense, but that time is gone. For life as you and I once knew it is irretrievably lost. Not only will life never again be the same as it was before 1914; it will never again be the same as it was before the Great Depression, never again the same as before the second world war, never again the same, even, as it was before the Cold War broke out in 1947.

Whether we like it or not, distances have been annihilated; most of the force of Europe, which governed the world for centuries, has been dissipated; Communism, a new type of religion for many, controls most of the northern half of the world from Poland east to the Pacific; and the United States has been forced by circumstances into leadership of one of the two conflicting philosophies and forces that divide the world.

So what happens in French Indo-China has meaning for us here in Macon County. It not only may mean that Macon County boys must die half way round the world; it has many other meanings. It might, for example, so disrupt British trade, the life blood of that nation, that Americans would have to choose whether to feed Britain's 50 millions or lose that ally.

If you and I should take a plane in Panama and fly directly east, across the Atlantic, across Central Africa, and across the Indian Ocean — two thirds of the way around the globe — we'd come to the southern tip of French Indo-China, a country the size of Texas.

Crescent-shaped, it lies on the east side of the Malay Peninsula, in southeastern Asia, a peninsula that forms a natural bridge between Communist China and India. To the south lie the islands of Borneo, Sumatra, and Java, where Macon County boys were fighting a decade ago. To the east lies the Pacific Ocean.

To the west, within the grasp of the crescent, lies Thailand (Siam). With the fall of Thailand, Burma, to its north, would be an easy prey to the Communists, and beyond Burma lies vast India.

That explains, in part, why the French have been fighting the Vietminh in Indo-China for some six years. It explains why the United States is supporting the French there. It suggests how serious it would be for the United States if the French should do what many Frenchmen think they should do—pull out of Indo-China.

Bouquets

Our congratulations to the Oak Grove, Carson, and Clark's Chapel communities, winners in the rural community Christmas lighting contest. Congratulations are due, too, to the other seven communities entered in the competition, for each did an excellent job; the displays were admired by thousands of people during the holidays.

There was a time when rural homes here were lit with kerosene lamps, and there was little encouragement to decorate for Christmas. That time, happily, has passed. And the rural areas have set a fine example by making their holiday lighting a community project, rather than doing it as individual families.

Across the continent to Pasadena, Calif., we send our best mountain manners . . . to Macon County's "book lady", Miss Angie W. Cox, who has been sending contributions of books — thousands of books — to the school libraries of this county ever since her one and only visit here, 15 years ago.

When it is considered that the reading of a single book sometimes sets a boy or girl afire, changing

his or her entire life, it is easy to see that the effects of Miss Cox's generosity are literally beyond measurement.

Letters

RELATED CONGRATULATIONS

To The Franklin Press:

Will you spare the space for us to wish you a happy and prosperous New Year?

This is rather belated, but we do want to congratulate and compliment you on your special edition of The Press in November honoring the communities in rural development. That was a wonderful issue and we feel that all communities taking part appreciated it as much as we did.

Thanks for your cooperation in our efforts.

We remain,

THE OAK GROVE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Calvin Roland, President  
Mrs. Kathryn Pennington, Vice-President  
Miss Louetta Browning, Junior President  
Mrs. Kate Bradley, Secretary-Treasurer

RAIDED CEMETERY

Dear Editor:

I want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas—especially the folks that took the boxwoods from our upper cemetery on Walnut Creek one morning before daylight.

How do I know? They were seen loading them on a truck.

Looks as if we will have to work double hard to win in the community contest.

Yours sincerely,

Gneiss, N. C.  
December 20, 1953.

MRS. ETTA SIMMONS

Poetry

Editor  
EDITH DEADERICK BERSKINE  
Weaverville, North Carolina

WISH FOR THE NEW YEAR

If I could make a wish come true  
It would not be for things,  
But that your ear be tuned to hear  
The rush of angels' wings.

If I could wish all things for you  
I would not leave out sorrow,  
For pain makes us appreciate  
The joys that come tomorrow.

If I could in the coming year  
Make any wish come true,  
I'd ask the Christ to breathe His peace  
Into the heart of you.

MARIE SMITH INZER

Others' Opinions

A SLIP LEFT A LOOPHOLE

(Asheville Citizen)

Apparently it was an accident, after all, which led to the drafting of a 1951 legislative act permitting county commissioners to hold secret sessions. Only one board of commissioners seems to have exercised that prerogative. After the New Hanover board went into private session recently, excluding press and public while it elected a county attorney, the 1951 act was cited to justify the secrecy.

Until 1951, legislative acts governing commissioners have provided that "every meeting shall be open to all persons." This clause was left out through an inadvertence in the drafting of a bill designed simply to permit special sessions of commissioners on shorter legal notice. We are satisfied from the explanation that there was no intent to hoodwink the public.

Of course, this does not excuse the New Hanover board. It violated the spirit of the general statutes and of the Constitution itself. Objection brought resort to the 1951 act with its legal boobytrap. It cannot be said too often that public business is the public's business—supposing that you agree with the basic tenets of democratic self-government. The pitiable fact is, of course, that the 1953 General Assembly itself was moved to embrace secrecy, so that alteration of the 1951 statute (let alone the 1953 one cloaking public spending) may be all the harder.

THIS 'CREEPING SOCIALISM'

(High Point Enterprise)

We're hearing more and more these days about "creeping socialism", and what a bad thing it is. We agree—it's bad, this subtle penetration of government into areas where private enterprise can function much more efficiently and successfully.

However, we get the unpleasant feeling that those who are loudest in their condemnation of this creeping monster are frequently most guilty of letting it happen. Only when they do, they change the name.

For instance, TVA we're told, is the worst kind of socialism. The authority doesn't pay taxes, and power authorities claim that in the main the difference between the cost of publicly-operated power and privately-owned is roughly equivalent to the tax differential which the private companies have to pay.

So far so good. But how about those accelerated tax write-offs for certain plants declared essential by Washington? The net result of a write-off is a huge reduction in taxes, the equivalent of a government subsidy. But businessmen don't call that socialism, that's "keeping our industrial potential strong." If a businessman gets a huge federal plant rent-free on the promise to make war materials, that's fine. But if the farmer gets a subsidy to help him maintain purchasing power, that's socialism.

You can't have it both ways. The fact is that last year farm subsidies amounted to 463 million dollars, while subsidies to business were over one billion dollars—more than twice as much. It looks as though we need a new definition about what "creeping socialism" really is. Right now it looks as though some people are changing the rules in the middle of the game.

WE ALL MAKE 'EM

(The Lincoln Times)

We have made a lot of mistakes and expect to make more in the future. We try to keep them to a minimum, but they still slip through. Sometimes, they even enrich newspaper reading, however, and these we don't mind.

For instance, last week, we committed a classical mistake, which we would like to call to the attention of our readers who may have overlooked it. We had a big laugh over it and we think you will too. Photographer Don Frazier was the first to spot it.

In Thursday's paper, under the heading of Brooms—which incidentally was what we were talking about—the following "boo-boo" showed up:

"Keep brooms clean by dipping them for a minute or two in boiling soap suds. If this is done once a week it will keep them tough and flexible and will prove a saving in both rugs and brooms."

Juick, ladies, pull your hubbies out of hot water, we were talking about brooms, not grooms!

NEXT FBI WILL TAIL 'UNCLE REMUS'

(Charlotte Observer)

Must Robin Hood go the way of Little Black Sambo? Mrs. Thomas J. White of the Indiana State Textbook Commission says he must. Consider his heinous crime: he robbed from the rich and gave to the poor. That, says Mrs. White, is just a variation of the Communist theme of destroying the bourgeoisie and leveling everybody down to the common denominator of poverty.

Bold Robin probably never thought of that. And can you imagine Friar Tuck consorting with a Communist in defiance of the Pope?

If this thing keeps up, we'll have no literature left, and future generations of boys and girls will be denied the thrill of vicarious high adventure. With Mrs. White's reasoning we could easily prove Tom Sawyer a spy up to some sabotage against Mississippi River shipping.

It would be no trick at all to read Socialist propaganda into "David Copperfield" or to show that the Three Musketeers were the minions of fascism. And in these days of cradle-to-grave social security, who would dare read that parable on self-reliance and independence, "Robinson Crusoe"?

Just think how the Seaman's Union could go to town with "Westward Ho" or "Captain Courageous" or "Two Years Before the Mast" or "Treasure Island."

There's no end to it. Before long we shall expect to read that Brer Rabbit has hailed Brer Fox into an international court on a genocide count.

THE IMPORTANT QUESTION

(Greensboro Daily News)

Is the Statue of Liberty in New York or New Jersey? That's the question in court right now but it isn't as important as the question: Is the spirit of liberty at large in the U. S. A.?

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

Like all good things, the Christmas holidays are about to come to an end—and all too soon! I find it quite a wrench, after two weeks at home, to leave again.

Not that I don't like Chapel Hill—I do. And not that I don't like my work there—I do. But because Franklin and Macon County have their own inimitable charm.

Incidentally, I've been struck, since I've been here for the holidays, just as I was when I first went to the University, by the vast distance between Franklin and Chapel Hill. I do not refer to the miles, though there are a lot of those between the two towns, but to the complete difference in atmosphere.

I think every Macon County student home from college for the holidays would agree that going from Macon County to a college community is almost like passing from one world to another; they are so different as to make it impossible really to make a comparison.

One reason for the difference, of course, is the fact that, in the strictly college community, everything revolves about the college and its activities. I found that out the Sunday be-

fore Christmas. Classes ended at noon Saturday, but I stayed over until Sunday morning—and at 8 o'clock that morning I could find no place in Chapel Hill open where I could get breakfast. The town closes with the school.

What makes an even greater difference, I suspect, is the fact that a college community is dominated by youth; the atmosphere is one of energy, enthusiasm, and zest for life.

So this is a new year!

What kind of a year will it be? Nobody can answer that question at the beginning of any new year, and least of all a year in this period of uncertainty and confusion.

But the kind of year it will be for you and me will be determined pretty much by the way we look at it. Our attitude may not be the deciding factor in where we are, what we are doing, or how much money we make. But it will be the deciding factor in whether we are happy or unhappy with our lot; whether we are bored or excited by what goes on about us; whether we use or waste the time and the experiences that come to us.

HUGGINS GETS SERGEANT RANK

Macon Soldier Now Serving in Germany With 43rd Division

D. L. Huggins, 24-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Forrest J. Huggins, of Franklin, Route 3, recently was promoted to sergeant while serving with the 43rd Infantry Division in Germany, the Army Home Town News Center announced this week.

Sgt. Huggins, an armorer in the division's 169th Regiment, has been overseas since October, 1951. His division is training as part of the NATO army for the defense of western Europe.

Tellico

Mrs. Jess Cook, who has been on the sick list, is improving.

Mr. and Mrs. A. P. Smith, of Alken, S. C., spent the holidays visiting Mrs. Smith's father, Rufus McGaha, and other relatives in this section.

Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Smith and family, Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Smith and son, all of Rock Hill, S. C., spent the week-end with the Smith's brothers, Arlin and Joe, and families.

Mr. and Mrs. Lee DeHart and Mrs. DeHart's nephew, Harry Hownes, of Belmont, spent the week-end visiting Mr. DeHart's brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. V. C. DeHart, and family.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard Smith, of Charlotte, are spending the Christmas holidays visiting his parents, the Rev. and Mrs. Judd Smith.

Mr. and Mrs. O. V. Fuller and family spent Christmas in Asheville visiting Mr. Fuller's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Garfield Fuller.

Mr. and Mrs. George Ramsey have gone to Hazelwood for an extended visit with Mrs. Ramsey's brother, Norman Justice, and family.

ABOVE THE PARALLEL  
Pfc. Earl Roane, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank R. Roane, of Franklin, Route 1, spent Christmas north of the 38th parallel in Korea, according to the Army Home Town News Center. He is on security duty with the 45th Infantry Division. He has been in Korea since August.

ON MERIT ROLL  
Miss Claudette McNeal, of Franklin, Route 1, was on the Merit Roll for the grading period just ended at Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School, where she is a student, the school principal, R. H. Philip, has announced.

Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Blockade liquor was demonstrating its baneful influence about Christmas in and around town.

Messrs. Dan Lyle and George Mashburn returned last Wednesday from Colorado after several years absence.

How much money has been raised to purchase a town clock?

Mr. Jule Robinson has been laid on the shelf for a week or more. Mumps is the trouble.

When you see a citizen going about with his or her neck all muffled up in woolen goods, it is safe to conclude that that citizen has mumps.

With two high schools in progress in Franklin, educational interests ought to flourish.

10 YEARS AGO

Franklin is expecting the largest crowd that ever assembled on the square in the history of Macon County on Saturday, New Year's Day, for the dedication of the "Roll of Honor" board to our men and women in uniform.

The Franklin Future Farmers of the agricultural classes of the Franklin High School are making needed equipment for the veterans confined to the Moore General Hospital at Swannanoa.

A sizable congregation gathered at the Methodist church Sunday night to welcome the new minister, the Rev. Leonard P. Smith. (Highlands Highlights).

J. E. Lancaster, formerly of Franklin, has accepted a position with the Farm Security Administration and is now located in Rutherfordton.